

**In The Claims:**

1           1.       An athletic training device for use in blocking balls, comprising:  
2           a front layer intended to contact a hit ball;  
3           a rear layer, which is intended to absorb force transmitted to said front  
4 layer;  
5           an insert portion disposed between and secured to each of said front  
6 layer and said rear layer, said insert portion being comprised of a relatively  
7 stiff material; and  
8           a hand receiving portion to allow receipt of a user's hand therein.

1           2.       The training device of claim 1, wherein said training device is a  
2 volleyball blocking training device.

1           3.       The training device of claim 2, wherein said insert portion is  
2 comprised of a plastic material.

1           4.       The training device of claim 2, wherein said front layer and said  
2 rear layer are comprised of a foam material.

1           5.       The training device of claim 4, wherein said rear foam layer is  
2 thicker than said front foam layer.

1           6.       The training device of claim 2, wherein said insert portion is  
2 designed to provide some flexibility, but is stiff enough to prevent the ball  
3 from consistently passing over or through the training device.

1           7.       The training device of claim 1, wherein said insert portion is  
2 glued to said front layer on one side and is glued to said rear layer on the  
3 other side.

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1 8. The training device of claim 4, further comprising:  
2 a covering surrounding said front foam layer, said insert portion, and said  
3 rear foam layer.

1 9. The training device of claim 8, wherein said covering is  
2 comprised of a fabric material.

1 10. The training device of claim 1, wherein said hand receiving  
2 portion is configured in the shape of a glove.

1 11. A volleyball blocking pad, comprising:  
2 a foam portion;  
3 a relatively stiff portion disposed in said foam portion;  
4 an outer covering encapsulating said foam portion; and  
5 a hand receiving portion secured to said outer covering.

1 12. The blocking pad of claim 11, wherein said foam portion is  
2 comprised of a front foam portion and a rear foam portion.

1 13. The blocking pad of claim 12, wherein said relatively stiff  
2 portion is disposed between said front foam portion and said rear foam  
3 portion.

1 14. The blocking pad of claim 12, wherein said front foam portion is  
2 thinner than said rear foam portion.

1 15. The blocking pad of claim 11, wherein said relatively stiff  
2 portion is comprised of a plastic material that also provides some flexibility.

1 16. The blocking pad of claim 11, wherein said outer covering is  
2 removable

1 17. The blocking pad of claim 11, wherein said hand receiving  
2 portion is configured in the shape of a glove.

1 18. A volleyball blocking pad, comprising:  
2 an absorbing portion for absorbing some force of a contacting  
3 volleyball;  
4 a relatively stiff portion in communication with said absorbing portion  
5 to allow said blocking pad to block said contacting ball, but still flex slightly  
6 backward;  
7 a hand portion in communication therewith for receipt of a user's hand  
8 therein.